

John Boehner  
Chairman  
8th District, Ohio

*House Meets at 11:00 a.m. for Legislative Business*

*Anticipated Floor Action:*

**H.R. 2158—FY 1998 VA/HUD Appropriations Act**

**H.R. 2160—FY 1998 Agriculture Appropriations Act**

**H.R. 2159—FY 1998 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act**



**H.R. 2158—FY 1998 VA/HUD Appropriations Act**

**Floor Situation:** The House will continue consideration of H.R. 2158 as its first order of business today. Yesterday, the House completed general debate and began considering amendments under an open rule that grants priority in recognition to members who have their amendments pre-printed in the *Congressional Record*. The rule waives points of order against the bill for containing measures within the jurisdiction of the Budget Committee that were not reported by it. It also waives House rules prohibiting unauthorized appropriations, legislative measures in an appropriations bill, and reappropriations. In addition, the rule makes in order two specific amendments, by Mr. Solomon and Mr. Shuster, respectively. It permits the chairman of the Committee of the Whole to postpone votes and reduce the voting time on a postponed vote to five minutes, so long as it follows a regular 15-minute vote. Finally, the rule provides one motion to recommit, with or without instructions.

**Summary:** H.R. 2158 appropriates \$91.7 billion in net new budget authority—\$5.8 billion more than in FY 1997 (\$5.2 billion more in discretionary spending) and \$666 million more than the president's request—for veterans benefits, housing programs, and various agencies dealing mostly with science, space, and the environment. A majority of these funds, \$70.1 billion, go toward discretionary spending programs, while the remaining \$21.6 billion is mandatory spending (outside of the control of the Appropriations Committee). Nearly half of the bill's funding, \$40.4 billion, supports the Department of Veterans Affairs' efforts to provide extensive health, housing, education, and compensatory benefits to military veterans and their dependents.

The bill provides \$25.1 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), \$8.8 billion more than FY 1997 and \$550 million more than the president requested, including \$9.2 billion

for Section 8 housing rental assistance. The bill provides \$7.2 billion for the Environmental Protection Agency, \$433 million more than in FY 1997 and \$432.4 million less than the president's request, as well as \$1.1 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The bill also provides \$13.6 billion for National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and eliminates funding for the Office of Consumer Affairs (\$1.5 million) and the Globe Program (Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment; \$1 million). CBO estimates that enactment of H.R. 2107 will result in outlays of \$52.8 billion in FY 1998, \$23.6 billion in FY 1999, \$6.4 billion in FY 2000, \$4.1 billion in FY 2001, and \$3.5 billion in FY 2002 and future years. The bill was submitted by Mr. Lewis (CA) and the Appropriations Committee ordered the bill reported by voice vote on July 8, 1997.

**Views (on the overall bill):**

**Republican Leadership:** Supports

**Chairman Livingston (Full):** Supports

**Chairman Lewis (Sub):** Supports

**Clinton Administration:** No Position Available

**Amendments:** Yesterday, the House completed debate, but did not vote, on the following amendments:

- \* an amendment by **Mr. Obey** to strike \$60 million earmarked for phase-one planning and construction of a wind simulation center in Idaho and increase funding for veterans medical care by an equal amount. The center is billed as a necessary component of an effective pre-disaster mitigation program that will permit the full-scale testing of structures under conditions representative of true disaster circumstances. **Contact: x5-3241**

The *Legislative Digest* was aware of the following other amendments to H.R. 2158:

**Mr. Barr** may offer an amendment (#2 or #3) to designate \$12 million of the funds currently appropriated for the EPA programs and management account to the Clean Rivers and Lakes program under section 314 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and \$88 million to carry out section 319 of the CWA. Section 314 provides funding to states through the EPA Office of Water Quality to determine the quality of the nation's lakes and develop feasible solutions (Phase I grants) and to implement solutions to correct these problems (Phase II and III). Section 319 of the CWA, the nonpoint source management program, provides funding to states to address water pollution problems regarding stormwater runoff from agricultural lands, forests, and urban areas. The amendment does not increase funding for the EPA. **Staff Contact: Glee Smith, x5-2931**

**Mr. Bentsen** may offer an amendment (#4) to prohibit the EPA from using funds to implement a ruling regarding the importation into the U.S. of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), which are used in insulation and electrical equipment. On March 15, 1996, the EPA issued a final rule allowing the importation of quantities of (PCBs), a chemical that has been charged with causing a range of adverse health effects including cancer, reproductive damage, and birth defects. Supporters argue that PCBs accumulate in the environment and move toward the top of the food chain, contaminating fish, birds, and ultimately humans. **Contact: x5-7508**

**Mr. Bereuter** may offer an amendment (#6) to prohibit funds from being used to implement the Veterans' Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA), a plan that provides medical care funding to regions across the country in a more equitable fashion. *Staff Contact: Pam Johnson, x5-4806*

**Mr. Evans** may offer an amendment to prohibit funds from being obligated for the integration of services at the Lakeside and West Side medical centers in Illinois until the VA Secretary approves a comprehensive services integration plan for the facilities. *Staff Contact: Tom O'Donnell, x5-5905*

**Mr. Evans** may offer an amendment to prohibit funds from being obligated to VA contractors who have committed serious and repeated federal labor and safety violations during the previous two fiscal years. *Staff Contact: Tom O'Donnell, x5-5905*

**Mr. Green** may offer an amendment (#1) to establish an Office of Community Planning and an Office of Inspector General within the Houston, Texas, HUD field office, using funds from the HUD salaries and expenses account. *Contact: x5-1688*

**Messrs. Foley, Bachus, Riley and Miller (FL)** may offer an amendment to freeze the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund at the FY 1997 level (\$50 million). The bill proposes a funding level of \$125 million. Proponents of the amendment believe the CDFI should not get a funding increase when it is currently under investigation by the Treasury Department's Inspector General. *Staff Contact: Erick Gustafson (Foley), x5-5792; Winton Yerby (Bachus), x6-3280*

**Mr. Hefley** may offer an amendment (#8) to (1) provide an additional \$11.2 million for the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) program (to fully fund the president's request of \$71.2 million) and (2) reduce HUD's management administration appropriation by \$31 million (freezing it at the FY 1997 level of \$420 million). *Staff Contact: Rob Smith, x5-4422*

**Ms. Jackson-Lee** may offer an amendment (#9) to increase funding for HUD Section 8 rental assistance by \$119.5 million and offset the increase by reducing FEMA planning grants by an equal amount. *Staff Contact: Leon Buck, x5-3816*

**Mr. Kennedy (MA)** may offer an amendment (#10) to increase funding for HUD Section 8 rental assistance by \$267.5 million in order to fund 45,000 new Section 8, tenant-based vouchers. It offsets those increases by reducing (1) FEMA planning grants by \$119.5 million, (2) human space flight by \$100 million, and (3) science, aeronautics, and technology by \$48 million. *Staff Contact: Scott Olsen, x5-5111*

**Mr. Kennedy (MA)** may offer an amendment (#11) to provide \$350 million for HUD low-income housing preservation activities (equal to the FY 1997 level; the bill currently provides no funding for these activities) and offsets the increase by increasing the bill's rescission of excess Section 8 contract reserves from \$565 million to \$915 million. *Staff Contact: Scott Olsen, x5-5111*

**Mr. Kennedy (MA)** may offer an amendment (#12) to increase funding for homeless programs by \$267 million (from the bill's current level of \$823 million to almost \$1.1 billion) by reducing funding for (1) NASA's human space flight account by \$100 million, (2) NASA's science, aeronautics, and technology account by \$48 million, and (3) FEMA planning grants by \$119.5 million. *Staff Contact: Scott Olsen, x5-5111*

**Mr. LaHood** may offer a series of amendments (#13-16) to:

- \* prohibit funds in the bill from being used to implement the ozone and particulate matter regulations by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- \* require the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee to conduct further studies of ozone and particulate matter pollution;
- \* require the National Science Foundation conduct a study on the health effects of ozone and particulate matter and pollution; and
- \* suspend implementation of the ozone and particulate matter regulations by the EPA until the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee has conducted additional studies on the effects of ozone and particulate matter pollution.

On June 25, 1997, President Clinton announced his decision to support revisions of national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for ozone and particulate matter similar to those proposed by the EPA in November 1996. The announcement ended a debate within the administration and made it virtually certain that the EPA will issue final standards by a July 19 deadline. Proponents of the amendment argue that any health possible benefits of the regulations do not justify the substantial cost to state and local governments, businesses, farmers, and citizens. Opponents contend that the standards are needed to combat the increasing health risks caused by air pollution. *Staff Contact: David Kunz, x5-6201*

**Mr. Nadler** may offer an amendment (#17) to reduce funding for both HUD's public and Indian housing account and NASA's human space flight account by \$305 million. *Contact: x5-5635*

**Mr. Nethercutt** may offer an amendment (#18) to require the Veterans Secretary to follow existing law and continue the planned implementation of the Veterans' Equitable Resource Allocation (VERA), a plan that provides medical care funding to regions across the country in a more equitable fashion. The VERA system was created in response to findings which indicated that the veteran population is shifting to different parts of the country but health care dollars are not. Proponents of the amendment argue that a provision in the bill, adopted during subcommittee consideration, undermines the fair allocation of VA funding, as provided under VERA, by freezing funding at FY 1996 levels and thus redirecting millions of dollars away from VA medical care networks. *Staff Contact: Rob Neal, x5-2006*

**Messrs. Pallone, Markey, and Ms. Degette** may offer an amendment to increase funding for Superfund by \$685 million over the bill's current level of \$1.5 billion. Proponents of the amendment argue that more money is needed to reduce the backlog of sites waiting for cleanup. Opponents argue that the amendment does nothing to address the problems within the program and will merely ensure that the status quo will continue, where Superfund cleanups continue to move along extremely slowly and nearly 90 cents of every dollar spent benefits trial lawyers. *Contact: x5-4671*

**Mr. Rohrabacher and Mr. Roemer** may offer an amendment (#20) to transfer \$100 million from NASA's human space flight account, provided for "Russian Program Assurance" activities, to NASA's science account for use in developing an additional type of reusable launch vehicle (to supplement the current development of the X-33 reusable launch vehicle). The \$100 million is currently allo-

cated to address specific U.S. program requirements resulting from Russian delays in meeting its commitments to the International Space Station program. **Staff Contact:** *Eric Sterner (Rohrabacher), x5-7858*

**Mr. Sensenbrenner** may offer an amendment (#21) to limit total spending on Space Station development and operations to \$1.9 billion (equal to the president's budget request). **Contact:** *x5-7858*

**Mr. Shuster** may offer an amendment to make funding provided for a \$60 million wind simulation center, as well as \$50 million provided for pre-disaster mitigation project grants to state and local governments, contingent upon enactment of authorizing legislation by April 1, 1998. **Contact:** *x5-2431*

**Mr. Solomon** may offer an amendment to guarantee that the VA medical care account will receive at least \$579 million in the event that third-party receipts fall short. The CBO and the Appropriations Committee estimate that \$604 million will also be made available for VA medical care through the Medical Care Collections Fund. Under the amendment, if the Veterans Affairs Secretary determines that such third-party reimbursements fall short of CBO estimates by more than \$25 million, the Treasury Secretary will then deposit unobligated funds into the Medical Care Collections Fund to cover the shortfall. The amendment is contingent upon enactment of authorizing legislation for the Medical Care Collections Fund—currently contained in H.R. 2015, the Balanced Budget Act—and is offset by reducing the EPA science and technology account by \$14 million (however, the account will still be funded at \$16 million above the president's request). **Contact:** *x5-5614*

**Mr. Solomon and Mr. Pombo** may offer an amendment (#22) to prohibit the use of funds for grants or contracts to universities and colleges that bar ROTC and military recruiters access to the general student population. The amendment applies only to research grants and contracts and does not affect federal student aid programs. **Staff Contact:** *Jim Doran, x5-7985*

**Mr. Stearns** may offer an amendment (#23) to increase funding for VA medical and prosthetic research by \$50 million and reduce funding for the AmeriCorps national service program by an equal amount. **Contact:** *x5-5744*

**Messrs. Wise, Miller (CA), and Fox** may offer an amendment (#5) to transfer \$3 million from the EPA's Environmental Programs and Management account to the Chemical Safety Hazard Investigation Board, an unfunded account this year (the president requested no funds for the board for FY 1998). Authorized by the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, the board is patterned after the National Transportation Safety Board, with a mission to investigate causes of industrial chemical accidents and make recommendations to industry based on those findings. **Staff Contact:** *Gail Sullivan, x5-2711*

**Mr. Vento** may offer an amendment (#26) to increase FEMA's emergency food and shelter account by \$30 million (the bill's current level is \$100 million, equal to the FY 1997 level and the president's request) and reduce funding for NASA's human space flight account by \$43 million. **Contact:** *x5-6631*

**Additional Information:** See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVI, #20, July 11, 1997.



## H.R. 2160—FY 1998 Agriculture Appropriations Act

**Floor Situation:** The House is scheduled to consider H.R. 2160 after it completes consideration of H.R. 2158. Appropriations bills are privileged and may be considered any time three days after they are filed; they do not require a rule for consideration.

**Summary:** H.R. 2160 appropriates \$49.6 billion in new FY 1998 budget authority for agriculture programs, \$4.3 billion less than FY 1997 and \$2.7 billion less than the president's request. When scorekeeping adjustments are taken into account, the bill provides \$35.8 billion for mandatory programs (almost 80 percent of the total) and \$13.7 billion for discretionary programs.

Much of the mandatory spending goes toward (1) food stamps (\$25.1 billion), (2) restoring the borrowing authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation (\$783.5 million), (3) child nutrition programs (\$7.8 billion), (4) the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (\$1.6 billion), as well as (5) \$1.1 billion for the Food for Peace (*P.L. 480*) program. Funding for the supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is \$3.9 billion, \$118 million more than last year. In addition, the bill limits spending on the Export Enhancement Program to \$205 million.

Regarding discretionary accounts, the bill appropriates \$73.6 million more than last year for cooperative state research and extension programs, \$24 million more for the Rural Housing Service, and \$29 million more for the Food Safety and Inspection Service. In contrast, it provides \$43.9 million less for the Farm Service Agency. A CBO cost estimate was unavailable at press time. The bill was submitted by Mr. Skeen; the Appropriations Committee ordered the bill reported by voice vote on July 9, 1997.

### Views (on the overall bill):

**Republican Leadership:** Supports

**Chairman Livingston (Full):** Supports

**Chairman Skeen (Sub):** Supports

**Clinton Administration:** No Position Available

**Amendments:** At press time, the *Legislative Digest* was aware of the following amendments to H.R. 2160:

**Mr. Cox** may offer an amendment (#1) to prohibit the use of U.S. funds (from the P.L. 480 Food for Peace program) to deliver food aid to North Korea. **Staff Contact:** *Mark Lagon, x6-0678*

**Mr. Dooley** may offer an amendment (#2) to strike the limitation on the use of funds for the positions of Deputy and Assistant Deputy Administrator within the Farm Service Agency. **Contact:** *x5-3341*

**Mmes. Lowey, Degette, and Smith (WA) and Messrs. Hansen and Meehan** may offer an amendment (#3) to prohibit funds in the bill from being used for tobacco crop insurance or tobacco-related extension services, which is estimated to provide \$34 million in savings. The amendment exempts crop insurance policies already in effect on the date of enactment. Proponents of scaling back tobacco programs argue that the government should not be subsidizing such an unhealthy product, considering recent revelations about tobacco company knowledge of the severe health consequences

of their products, when it is subsidizing other programs to specifically curb tobacco use. Opponents of scaling back the tobacco program point out that there is little, if any link between programs that assist farmers and a consumer's choice to smoke, and that there is a need for even tobacco farmers to receive assistance to insure against natural disasters and encourage environmentally sound cropping practices (as typically offered for other commodities). *Contact: (Lowey), x5-6506; (Degette), x5-4431*

**Mr. Meehan and Mr. Hansen** may offer an amendment (#4) to increase funding for the FDA's tobacco initiatives by \$14 million and offset the increase by reducing funding for the federal crop insurance corporation's (FCIC) sales commissions by an equal amount. The bill currently provides \$188.6 million for sales commissions (\$36 million more than the president's request) to private insurance companies participating in the FCIC program, which reimburses private companies for expenses associated with selling and servicing crop insurance policies. *Staff Contact: Bill McCann (Meehan), x5-3411*

**Mr. Miller (FL) and Mr. Schumer** may offer an amendment to prohibit funds in the bill from being used to carry out the "non-recourse" loan portion of the sugar program. The amendment leaves intact the "recourse" loan program for processors, as well as the sugar tariff rate quota. "Recourse" means processors are obligated to repay the loan with interest in cash, rather than exercise the legal right (under "non-recourse" policy) to hand over sugar offered as collateral in full payment of the loan. Proponents of the amendment argue that recipients (processors, not farmers) of "non-recourse" loans receive the loans at below market rates—making taxpayers bear all the risk—yet still forcing sugar prices on consumers at almost twice the cost of the world market. Opponents of the amendment counter that reducing the subsidy will increase financial uncertainty for sugar farmers and thus continue to erode their "safety net." In addition, it will devastate an efficient sugar industry by driving producers out of business and wreak havoc on consumers and industrial users who rely on timely shipments of sugar. *Staff Contact: Stephanie Elrad (Miller), x5-5015; Kate Scheeler (Schumer), x5-6616*

**Mr. Neumann and Mr. Kanjorski** may offer an amendment (#5) to establish a maximum market price for peanut sales of \$550 per ton. The 1996 Farm Bill established a maximum market price for peanuts of \$610 per ton. Supporters contend that peanut prices are artificially inflated at the expense of consumers, and that even with a reduction, the market price of \$550 per ton is still \$200 per ton higher than the world market price. However, opponents counter that changes made by the 1996 Farm Bill reduced the quota support level by 10 percent and argue that the 1996-enacted provisions should be given an opportunity to work. *Staff Contact: Scott Heins (Neumann), x5-3031; Alan Pentz (Kanjorski), x5-6511*

**Mr. Sanders** may offer an amendment (#6) to increase funding for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program by \$3.7 million and reduce the appropriation for the Market Access Program (currently funded at \$90 million) by an equal amount. SARE provides grants to farmers and ranchers, local cooperative extension services, and research institutions to promote economically viable, environmentally sound agricultural practices. *Staff Contact: Steve Bressler, x5-4115*

**Mr. Sanders** may offer an amendment (#7) to increase funding for the Meals on Wheels program by \$8 million and offset the increase by reducing funding for the Agricultural Research Service by \$8.5 million. *Staff Contact: Steve Bressler, x5-4115*

**Mr. Sanders** may offer an amendment (#8) to increase funding for the Meals on Wheels program by \$8 million and offset the increase by reducing funding for the federal crop insurance corporation's sales commissions by \$11 million. *Staff Contact: Steve Bressler, x5-4115*

**Mr. Schumer** may offer an amendment to prohibit funds from being used for the Commodity Credit Corporation's market access program (MAP), enacted as part of the 1978 Agricultural Trade Act. MAP is a mandatory program that does not require an annual appropriation. Correspondingly, the amendment eliminates \$90 million for FY 1998 authorized for the program. MAP funds market development and market promotion efforts, on a cost-sharing basis, for nonprofit agricultural trade organizations, state and regional trade groups, and private companies. *Contact: x5-6616*

**Mr. Schumer** may offer an amendment to prohibit funds from being used for the Commodity Credit Corporation's market access program (MAP) to issue a marketing assistance loan to any person who has an annual adjusted gross income of \$100,000 or more from non-farm sources. *Contact: x5-6616*

**Mr. Stenholm** may offer an amendment (#9) to strike the limitation on the use of funds for the positions of Deputy and Assistant Deputy Administrator within the Farm Service Agency. *Contact: x5-0317*

**Mr. Stenholm** may offer an amendment to strike a requirement in current law that the Pecan Genetics Research Laboratory be transferred Texas A & M University. *Contact: x5-0317*

**Mr. Wynn** may offer an amendment (#10 or #11) to increase funding for civil rights enforcement through the USDA's departmental administration account by \$1.5 million and reduce spending for the Market Access Program by an equal amount. *Staff Contact: Claudia Arko, x5-8699*

**Additional Information:** See *Legislative Digest*, Vol. XXVI, #20, Pt. II, July 14, 1997.



## **H.R. 2159—FY 1998 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act**

**Floor Situation:** The House may begin consideration of H.R. 2159 after it completes consideration of H.R. 2160. The *Legislative Digest* will publish a supplement describing potential amendments if consideration becomes likely.

